

# Congressman John Fogarty

## WAGES THE GOOD FIGHT

By FRED ROSS

**P**EOPLE are fond of John E. Fogarty, Congressman from Rhode Island. People like him—and he likes people.

The lawmaker is a fine-looking man of 44 who comes from Harmony, a little town near Providence. He seems to know almost everybody in the entire state. He is warmly greeted wherever he goes.

One of Congressman Fogarty's old friends told this reporter:

"John hasn't changed a bit. His friends counted on him when he was a boy in school. They still depend on him. And he never fails them."

Congressman Fogarty's record in Washington shows his regard for people and his sympathetic understanding of their needs. He wants to help people—and he has proceeded on the theory that he can help them most effectively by fighting for the right kind of legislation.

A member of the House of Representatives since 1941, Mr. Fogarty takes his job very seriously. More than a decade ago—during the Seventy-ninth Congress—he was named to the Appropriations Subcommittee handling labor, education, health and welfare matters. He is now the chairman of this important subcommittee.

Congressman Fogarty has made himself an expert on the Department of Labor and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. These are the Departments which are the concern of his subcommittee.

His expert knowledge of the operations of both of these Departments has been demonstrated on many occasions—but never more impressively than in the current session of Congress. Congressman Fogarty was magnificently effective in blocking the efforts of certain lawmakers determined to

use the meat ax on the appropriations for the two Departments.

During the debate one Congressman saw fit to make a slighting reference to Mr. Fogarty as a former bricklayer.

For a decade prior to his first election to the House, John Fogarty was a bricklayer. He is very proud of that fact. He is proud that he was president of Local 1 in Providence for four years. And it is with profound pride that he still carries his union card.

Congressman Fogarty, a Democrat, heard the remark which was intended to be disparaging. Unruffled, and with simple dignity, he replied that he was very proud of having been a workingman.

It was Republican Congressman Charles Wolverton from New Jersey who took the floor to back Mr. Fog-

arty and demolish the slighting remark.

"The gentleman from Rhode Island, as chairman of his great committee," said Mr. Wolverton, "has presented a clear and lucid picture of the health needs of the nation, what has been accomplished and what is planned for the future."

And Congressman Wolverton concluded his tribute by saying:

"Let's get more bricklayers in the House."

Primarily through the efforts of Congressman Fogarty, the National Institutes of Health at Bethesda, Maryland—part of the United States Public Health Service—have grown into a large research organization. The Institutes conduct programs which will lead, it is hoped, to the ultimate conquest of cancer, heart disease, mental illness and other ailments.



The lawmaker from Rhode Island at his desk. He was a hard worker when he was laying bricks years ago, and he is a hard worker in Washington today.

When John Fogarty first became a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee in 1946, the total National Institutes of Health appropriation was just \$3,500,000. To Congressman Fogarty goes the credit of obtaining passage of an appropriation bill for NIH of \$22,000,000 for fiscal 1958.

In recognition of his outstanding leadership in the health field, President Eisenhower named him several months ago as a Congressional adviser to the United States delegation at the tenth World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

John Fogarty's efforts have not been confined to the health and labor fields. Just recently he testified against a natural gas bill that would be detrimental to the consumers.

"I have been unable to learn," he said, "of a single natural gas producer who has suffered from appropriate regulation which the Federal Power Commission is authorized to administer under the present provisions of the Natural Gas Act.

"Raising costs of natural gas would take additional tolls from the consuming public and add them to the rich profits already enjoyed by an industry which we favor with special tax treatment designed to offset the special risks which are inherent in their operations."

**T**HE Congressman also took the floor of the House recently to fight for federal flood insurance.

"As things stand today," he said, "your constituents and mine cannot buy flood insurance. Private companies won't sell them any, and until we get the government program going they cannot buy federal flood insurance."

Congressman Fogarty's fight for adequate appropriations for vital activities of the federal government has earned him the praise of the labor movement.

"You have brought great credit not only to yourself but to Congress and the labor movement of which you are a proud member," AFL-CIO President George Meany wrote the Rhode Islander last spring.

"I predict that for many years people will be quoting your clear answer to Congressman [Emmet F.] Byrne [Republican of Illinois] when he tried to slight you by referring to your former occupation. Your proud statement in defense of 'anyone who earns

his bread by the sweat of his brow' will stand as an eloquent tribute to you.

"We are all aware of the tremendous odds against which you were working. The failure of any of the Republican leaders to come to the defense of the Administration's own budget made your task almost impossible. Yet you managed to prevent some of the worst slashes.

"It is another indication of the advantages of the democratic system that when you forced your colleagues to stand up and be counted, they reversed themselves and voted with you to prevent some of the cuts.

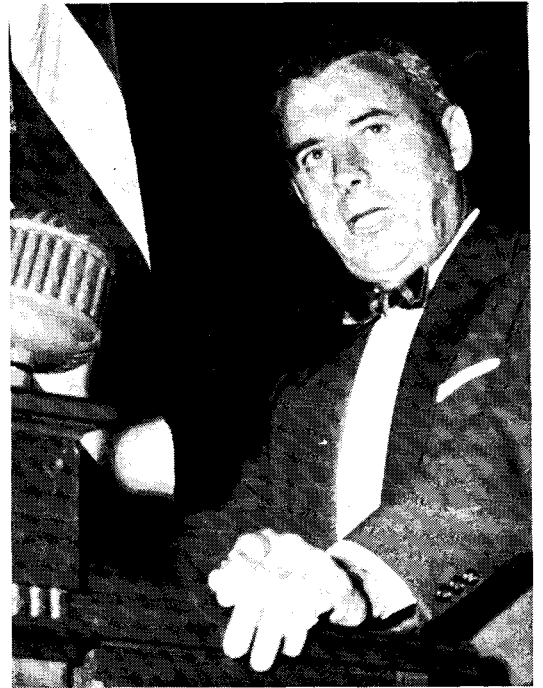
"On behalf of the fifteen million members of the AFL-CIO—the bricklayers and the barbers and the butchers and all the others—I extend to you fraternal greetings and appreciation."

Another leader of labor who wrote to Congressman Fogarty was International President Harry C. Bates of the Bricklayers. In his letter to the fighting Rhode Island legislator, Mr. Bates said:

"I have had occasion to read excerpts from the House record of April 2, 1957, in which Congressman Byrne of Illinois remarked on your station in life as a bricklayer and your intelligent reply to his remarks. I feel confident that the distinguished members of the House of Representatives were not at all impressed with the remarks uttered by Congressman Byrne.

"John, I have often told you of my feelings for you, and I should like to take this occasion to again express them for the record. For my colleagues on the executive board of this international union, for myself and for the thousands of our members in America, I want to make known to you our sincere and heartfelt appreciation for the credit you have brought to yourself and our organization, both in your capacity as a bricklayer and a distinguished member of Congress.

"The record you have compiled during your many years as a Congressman is one that has endeared you to the hearts of the workers of this country. Your sound judgment in carrying on the fight to retain certain funds for the proper functioning of



**The Congressman, speaking recently at a gathering of federal employees, told them they can progress through organization.**

several Departments has likewise won for you the admiration and the undying gratitude of untold numbers of people in all walks of life."

Mr. Fogarty's voting record shows that he has earned these words of praise. He has consistently voted to protect and advance the well-being of the nation's plain people. He was one of those who voted to uphold President Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947.

He was among those on the right side in the successful effort to recommit the Wood bill, which would have worsened the Taft-Hartley Act.

In 1952 he voted to ask President Truman to refuse to use a Taft-Hartley injunction against the striking Steelworkers.

The bricklayer from Rhode Island has always given his support to the postal workers in their efforts to obtain wage increases.

He cast his vote against the amendment removing one million people, previously covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act, from minimum wage coverage.

And he continues to fight the good fight for the labor movement. In the rarified atmosphere of Washington, he has remained a good trade unionist. He has not forgotten that he is a dues-paying member of the Bricklayers, as was his late father and as is his older brother, William.

The Providence bricklayers fondly

remember him as a fine union member and leader. Only 23 when first elected president of his local, he was the youngest man ever to have held the post.

Henry Dodd, business agent of the local, told why he was chosen for four successive years to lead the organized bricklayers.

Mr. Dodd said that the members recognized him as "a good, smart, live young fellow." He added that he was "a good speaker, a good mechanic and a good leader." The business agent also remembered that "John Fogarty was always trying to get jobs for the older members, and he succeeded in many cases."

Although the Congressman from Rhode Island maintains that his years in the local presidency were "un-eventful," Mr. Dodd takes a different view. John Fogarty carried the ball for the bricklayers in negotiations with the employers. He was an effective negotiator, winning substantial pay increases for his members.

**T**he future lawmaker was only 17 when he started his apprenticeship as a bricklayer. While following his trade, he also attended Providence College. In 1946 that institution awarded him an honorary Doctor of Political Science degree.

Congressman Fogarty is worried about the pockets of unemployment and distress which exist in New England and other parts of the nation. In his own state of Rhode Island, thousands are jobless because of the closing of textile mills and a depressed condition in the jewelry industry.

Recently the State Department of Employment Security estimated that 31,200 were unemployed in a work force of 360,000 or 8.8 per cent.

John Fogarty's grasp of the problems of people and his desire to help them have led him to initiate a two-pronged attack on unemployment problems.

He has introduced a bill to create a federal agency to assist areas having chronic unemployment problems. It is a companion bill to one spon-

sored by Senator Paul H. Douglas of Illinois.

Virtually identical bills were aired for months at Capitol Hill and field hearings last year. At the same time the Senate passed the Douglas bill by a healthy margin, but the House,



A little chat about a pending bill.

eager to adjourn for the summer, failed to act.

John Fogarty is not waiting for Congress to act, although he hopes to see the needed legislation enacted. He is using the facilities at hand in an effort to put more people to work in Rhode Island.

As a result of his planning, representatives of several federal agencies met recently at Woonsocket with civic, labor and business leaders and state government representatives.

John Fogarty's abiding love for humanity was shown in a speech at a recent New York luncheon.

He told of the great progress made through medical research in eliminating human ailments in the past ten years. He told of drugs that have been developed to curb tuberculosis, blindness in prematurely born babies, heart disease, mental illness, polio and other maladies.

"I am greatly encouraged by these milestones in medical progress," said Mr. Fogarty. "But the most impressive and, to me, the most important accomplishment of the past ten years is that during that period, as a result of these medical discoveries, five years of life have been added to the span of every man, woman and child in America.

"That, to me, is the most vivid and graphic way we can sum up the progress we have made in the decade. A child born today can expect to live

five years longer than a child born ten years ago.

"This medical miracle has more meaning to me than the invention of the telephone or the radio or the automobile or the airplane. For while each of these inventions was historic and had far-reaching effects on our way of living, they touched only the periphery of our lives, while here is something that affects directly and clearly the most fundamental and precious possession we have—*life itself.*"

The lawmaker from Rhode Island maintains his deep devotion for organized labor and its principles. He has no use for free riders who are perfectly willing to accept the better wages and better working conditions which are won by trade unions but who refuse to join up. When he was a working bricklayer, he regarded free riding as unfair. And he still feels that way.

He believes firmly that it is sensible and proper for governmental employees to belong to unions. A few days ago, at a meeting in Washington marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of two lodges of the American Federation of Government Employees, he remarked:

"The only way you get a raise is to have an organization speak for you. In government service, the same as anywhere else, you need organization."

The Congressman said that federal employees who belong to unions should take pride in their membership, just as he is proud of belonging to the Bricklayers. Like other toilers, government workers can gain increased security as well as higher pay through organization, he declared.

Mrs. Fogarty, a former school teacher, was Miss Louise Rohland of Rehoboth, Massachusetts. The Fogartys have a ten-year-old daughter, Mary.

Congressman Fogarty has been doing a splendid job for the welfare of the American people for a number of years. It is gratifying that such an outstanding legislator comes from the ranks of our own labor movement.